

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A purified protein which specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal tract receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI.

2. A protein which binds specifically to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the protein comprises an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:1-55 or a binding portion thereof.

3. A protein which binds specifically to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the amino acid sequence of the protein is selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:1-55, or a binding portion thereof.

4. The protein of claim 2 which comprises the amino acid sequence substantially as set forth in: SEQ ID NO: 4, SEQ ID NO: 6, SEQ ID NO: 22, SEQ ID NO: 23, SEQ ID NO: 30, SEQ ID NO: 43, SEQ ID NO: 46, or SEQ ID NO: 52, or a binding portion thereof.

5. The protein of claim 3, the amino acid sequence of which consists of the amino acid sequence substantially as set forth in: SEQ ID NO: 4, SEQ ID NO: 6, SEQ ID NO: 22, SEQ ID NO: 23, SEQ ID NO: 30, SEQ ID NO: 43, SEQ ID NO: 46, or SEQ ID NO: 52, or a binding portion thereof.

6. A protein of not more than 50 amino acids in length which specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the protein includes, positioned anywhere along its sequence, the contiguous amino

positioned anywhere along its sequence, the contiguous amino acid sequence of: Val Arg Ser Gly Cys Gly Xaa₁ Xaa₂ Ser Ser (SEQ ID NO:255), where Xaa₁ is Ala or Phe; and Xaa₂ is Arg or His.

5

15. The protein of claim 14 which is not more than 40 amino acids in length.

10 16. The protein of claim 14 which is not more than 30 amino acids in length.

17. The protein of claim 14 which is not more than 20 amino acids in length.

15 18. A protein of not more than 50 amino acids in length which specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the protein includes, positioned anywhere along its sequence, the contiguous amino
20 acid sequence of: NTRKSSRSNRR (SEQ ID NO:256) or STKRSLIYNHR (SEQ ID NO:257) or STGRKVFNRR (SEQ ID NO:258) or TNAKHSSHNR (SEQ ID NO:259).

25 19. A protein of not more than 50 amino acids in length which specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the protein includes, positioned anywhere along its sequence, the contiguous amino acid sequence of: DSDVRRPW (SEQ ID NO:260) or AADQRRGW (SEQ
30 ID NO:261) or DGRGGRSY (SEQ ID NO:262).

20. A protein of not more than 50 amino acids in length which specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal transport receptor selected from the group consisting of
35 HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, in which the protein includes, positioned anywhere along its sequence, the contiguous amino

49. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:55-109.

5 50. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the protein of claim 1.

51. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the protein of claim 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 18,
10 19 or 20.

52. The nucleic acid of claim 51 which is a DNA.

53. The nucleic acid of claim 48 or 49 which is
15 isolated.

54. The nucleic acid of claim 51 which is isolated.

20 55. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence of claim 57.

56. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a
25 nucleotide sequence encoding a fragment of the protein of claim 1, 2, or 3, which fragments bind to said gastrointestinal tract receptor.

57. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide
30 sequence encoding the chimeric protein of claim 41.

58. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the fragment of claim 47.

35 59. The nucleic acid of claim 57 which is isolated.

hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, hemophilia, anemia, cancer, migraines, and angina pectoris.

80. The method according to claim 76 in which the
5 subject is a human.

81. A composition comprising the protein of claim
1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 18, 19, 20, or 46 wherein the protein is
coated onto or absorbed onto or covalently bonded to the
10 surface of a nano- or microparticle.

82. A nano- or microparticle formed from the
protein of claim 1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 18, 19, 20, or 46.

83. The composition of claim 87, wherein the nano-
or microparticle is a drug-loaded or drug-encapsulating nano-
or microparticle.

84. A method of detecting or measuring the level
20 of a gastro-intestinal tract receptor in a sample, comprising
contacting a sample suspected of containing a gastro-
intestinal tract receptor with the protein of claim 1, 2, 3,
6, 10, 14, 18, 19, 20, or 46 under conditions conducive to
binding between the protein and any of said receptor in said
25 sample, and detecting or measuring any of said binding that
occurs, in which the detected or measured amount of binding
indicates the presence or amount of the receptor in the
sample.

85. A method of identifying a molecule that
specifically binds to a ligand selected from the group
consisting of the protein of claim 1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, 18, or
19, a fragment of said protein comprising a domain of the
protein, and a nucleic acid encoding said protein or
35 fragment, comprising

(a) contacting said ligand with a plurality of molecules under conditions conducive to binding between said ligand and the molecules; and

(b) identifying a molecule within said plurality that specifically binds to said ligand.

86. An isolated nucleic acid encoding a fragment of a gastro-intestinal tract receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, or encoding a chimeric protein comprising said fragment, said fragment consisting essentially of the extracellular domain of the receptor.

87. A cell containing and capable of expressing a recombinant nucleic acid encoding a fragment of a gastro-intestinal tract receptor selected from the group consisting of HPT1, hPEPT1, D2H, and hSI, or encoding a chimeric protein comprising said fragment, said fragment consisting essentially of the extracellular domain of the receptor.

88. The cell of claim 87 which contains an expression vector comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding said fragment operably linked to a heterologous promoter.

89. A method for identifying a molecule that specifically binds to a gastro-intestinal tract receptor comprising contacting a fragment of the receptor, or a chimeric protein comprising said fragment, with a plurality of test molecules under conditions conducive to binding between said fragment or protein and the molecules, and identifying a molecule within said plurality that specifically binds to said fragment or protein, in which the fragments consist essentially of the extracellular domain of the receptor.

90. The composition of claim 22 for use as a medicament.

91. The composition of claim 28 for use as a medicament.

92. The composition of claim 29 for use as a medicament.

93. The composition of claim 81 for use as a medicament.

10 94. The composition of claim 23 in which the drug is insulin or leuprolide.

95. The composition of claim 24 in which the active agent is insulin or leuprolide.

15 96. The composition of claim 25 in which the drug is insulin or leuprolide.

20 97. The composition of claim 28 in which the drug is insulin or leuprolide.

25

30

35